LODI HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Incorporated October 20, 1988

LODI HISTORIAN

VOLUME 19, NUMBER 3 SUMMER 2008

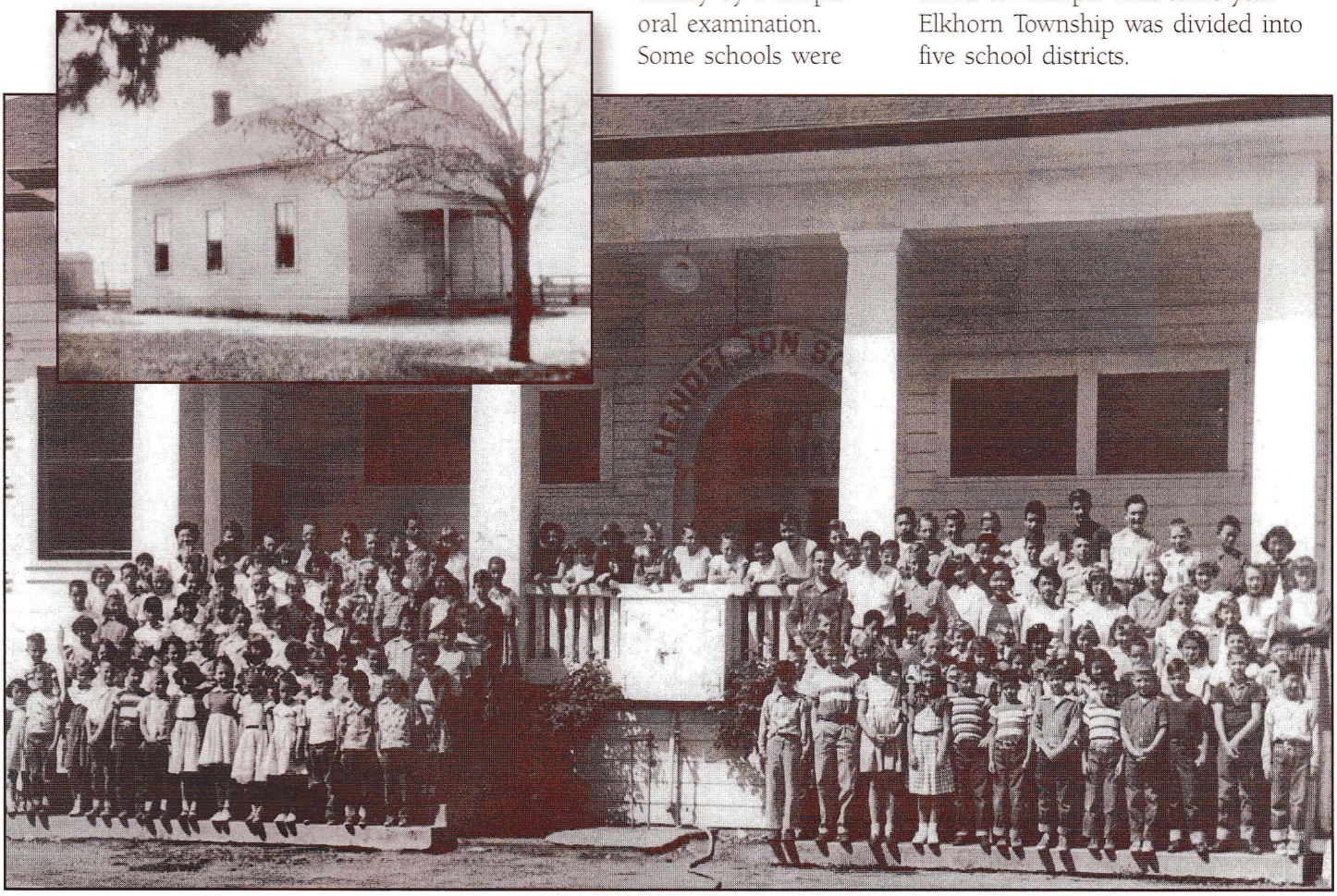
LODI RURAL SCHOOLS

By Ralph Lea and Janice Roth

In 1852, the California legislature enacted the Common School Act which created a three-level system of public instruction-State, County and Local districts. A San Joaquin Superintendent was named and in 1853, school districts were formed where children lived. Students, ideally, were not expected to travel more than two miles to school. Local funds and general obligation bonds needed to be approved by the voters for schools to be built.

Each school was a separate district and had its own board. The school board was charged with helping to meet the educational needs of the students and to certify teachers, usually by a simple oral examination. Some schools were started in houses and churches. School buildings were built as money and lumber became available.

Henderson was the first school outside of Stockton and was in a house near Armstrong Road and West Lane. A school building was constructed in 1855 to take care of the 108 students from the Elkhorn and Elliott townships. That same year Elkhorn Township was divided into five school districts.



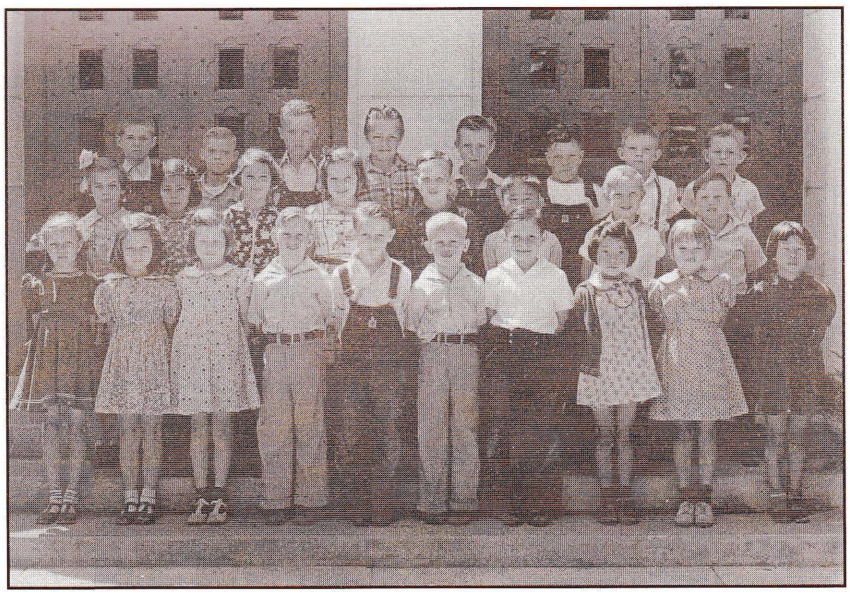
▲ *HENDERSON SCHOOL. The inset shows the original Henderson School, which was built in 1855 on J.C. Caldwell land. The 1st school was replaced in 1911 by this building, two classrooms and an auditorium. In 1922 more improvements were made costing $10,000.*

▲ *WOODS / WOODBRIDGE SCHOOLS, circa 1987. (inset) First grade class at Woods School taken in 1922. Bottom row, left to right: Walter Gordon, Roland Donahue, Lawrence Barro, Ida McCoy, Alma Kramer (Mrs. Beeskau), Ufasema Barsotti and Florance Barsotti. Center row, left to right: Tadashi Kaba, Kenneth Welch, Charles Wagaman, John Engle, Dottie Rouse, Unidentified and Markey (given name not known). Top row, left to right: Unidentified, Melvin Davis, Robert Rutledge, Ora Strother, Lester Hopkins, Barbara Newman, Eleanor Allington, Helen Dickman, Marjorie Roberts and Esther Nepkau. Standing at rear is teacher Gladys Boynton. Spelling of the names is as provided by Mrs. Beeskau.*

Woods School was built on land donated by John Gerard at the intersection of Lower Sacramento and Turner Roads in 1856. A few years later, classes were held in the first floor of the Woodbridge Hall on the bank of the Mokelumne River and a one-story brick store located in the north end of town.

By the mid 1870's a new two story school was built in the west part of town but by 1903 Woods

▲ *WOODBRIDGE COLLEGE building, 1907.*



▲ *WOODS SCHOOL, 1941, 4th grade class.* *Photo courtesy of Bill Webb*

▲ *SALEM SCHOOL, 1883. On the left the two story school built 1872 and not yet moved uptown to be part of Lodi Hotel. On the right the new two story eight room school of 1883 which lasted until 1938.*

▲ *SALEM SCHOOL, 1889. (upper row l to r:) Daisy Marilla Plegs (age 17), Unknown, Benny Baird and Carrie Ivory. (middle row) Mary Pickens (always wore apron), Emma Witte, Stella Simpson, Mr. W. B. Piper, Blanche Shattuck, Emma Tindel, and Carleton. (bottom row) Gertrude Rowland, Dave Kettleman, George Hall and Georgia Carleton.*

School had moved to the old San Joaquin College that was bought for $10 in gold coin. In 1921, bonds were sold and a masonry building was constructed on the site and became a school in the newly formed Woodbridge School District.

Lodi's historic Salem School District was formed on May 6, 1859, with a school house built on the south side of the Mokelumne River just east of Cherokee Lane on land owned by Ezekiel Lawrence. Three years later the school was moved south on Cherokee to the Barnhart Property. In 1868, there was activity in the new Mokelumne Station (Lodi) and the school moved a second time west on the county road (Sargent) and the east side of the Central Pacific Railroad on the Wardrobe Property.

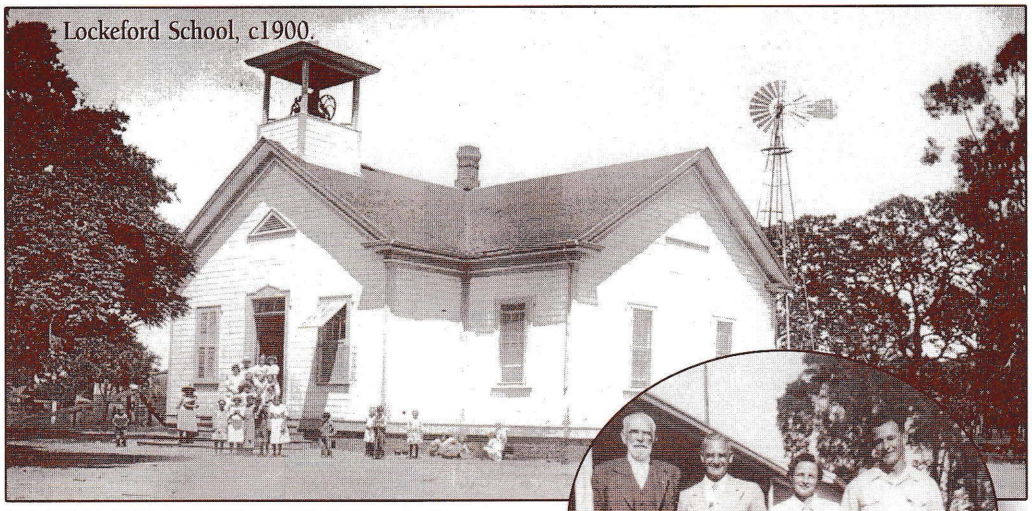
Lockeford School started a mile west of Staples Ferry in a tent and then moved east in 1856 to a wooden octagon building that was moved to Lockeford in 1864. A new building was erected in 1875 and lasted until 1948 when it was replaced by a new stucco four room school on Tully Road in Lockeford.

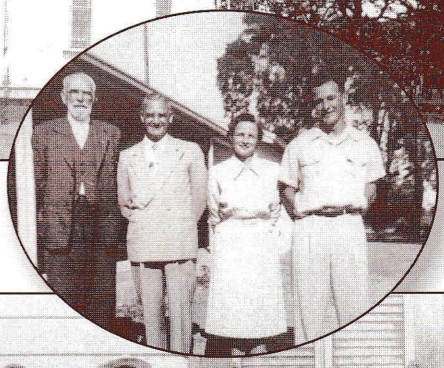
▲ *SALEM SCHOOL, 1920. Gene Beckman, 1st row-far right.*
Photo courtesy of Robert Beckman.

▲ *SALEM SCHOOL. 1st and 2nd grades.* *Photo courtesy of Howard Mason.*

LODI RURA

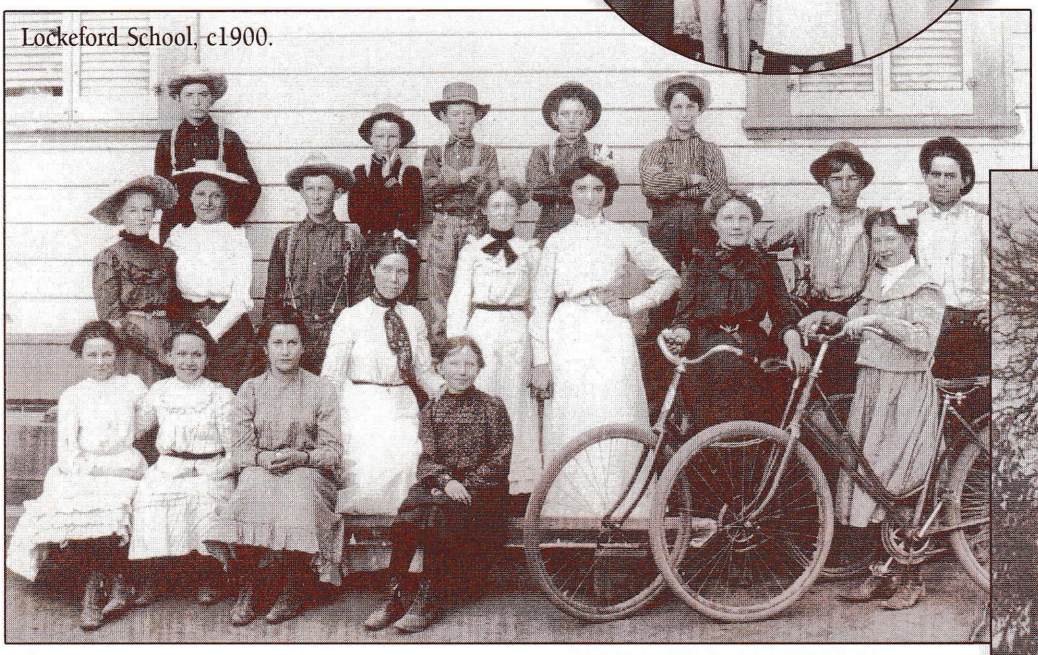
A snapshot in time; Lockeford,

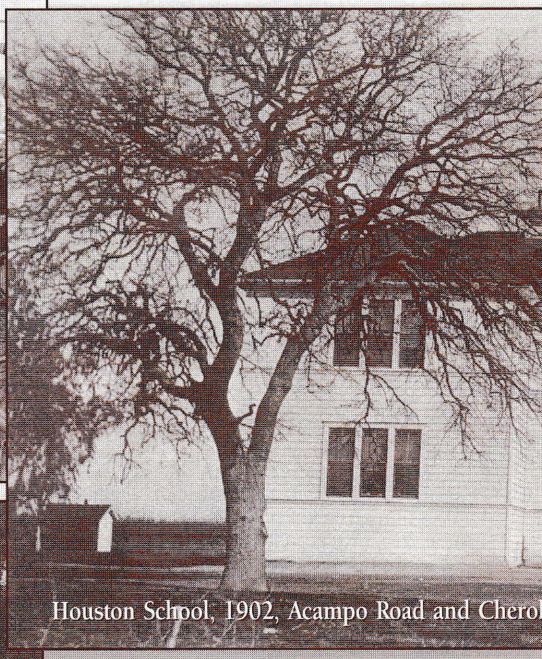


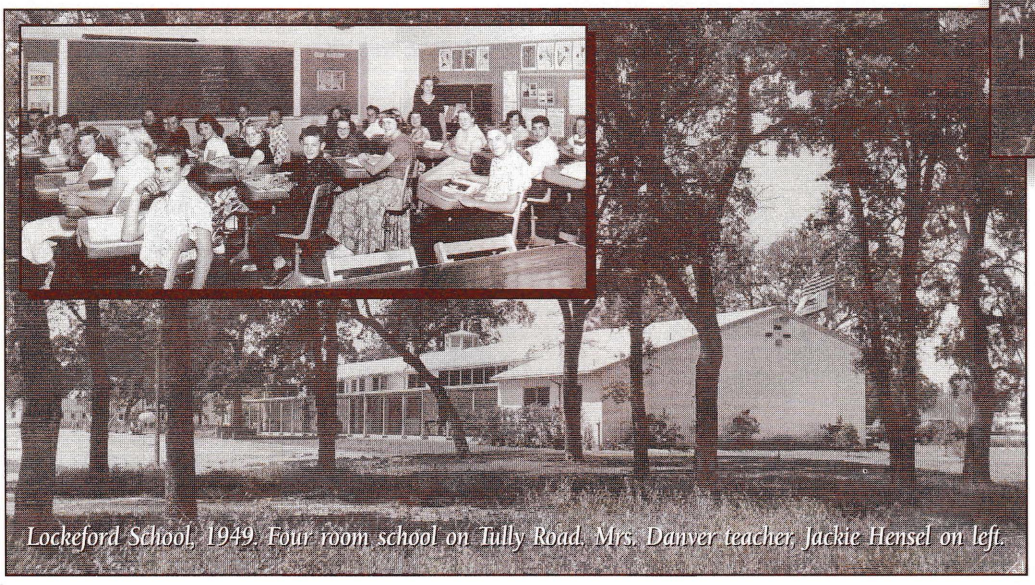


▲ *LOCKEFORD SCHOOL, c 1900. Built on Locke property in 1875 near Jack Tone Road. The building is being preserved. (Inset l to r:) George "Doc" Locke, unknown, Mrs. Danver, principal and Chet Locke.*

▲ *HOUSTON SCHOOL. Bottom row (l to r:) George Walton Woodson. Second row: Freeman Holstein, Tower, Velma Baker, Clara Wall (Mrs. Hugh Stea Frederick Witt, Lloyd Wakefield, Orion Wakefield, Frank Peikert, Erma Berry Reese, long time Princi*





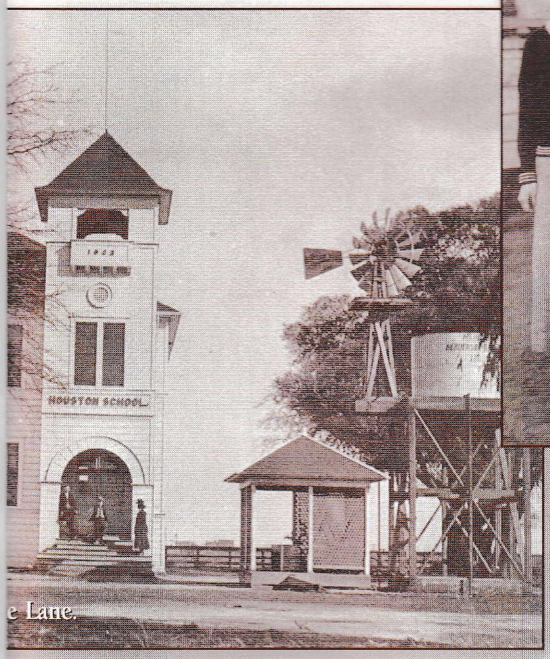


Lockeford School, 1949. Four room school on Tully Road. Mrs. Danver teacher, Jackie Hensel on left.

L SCHOOLS

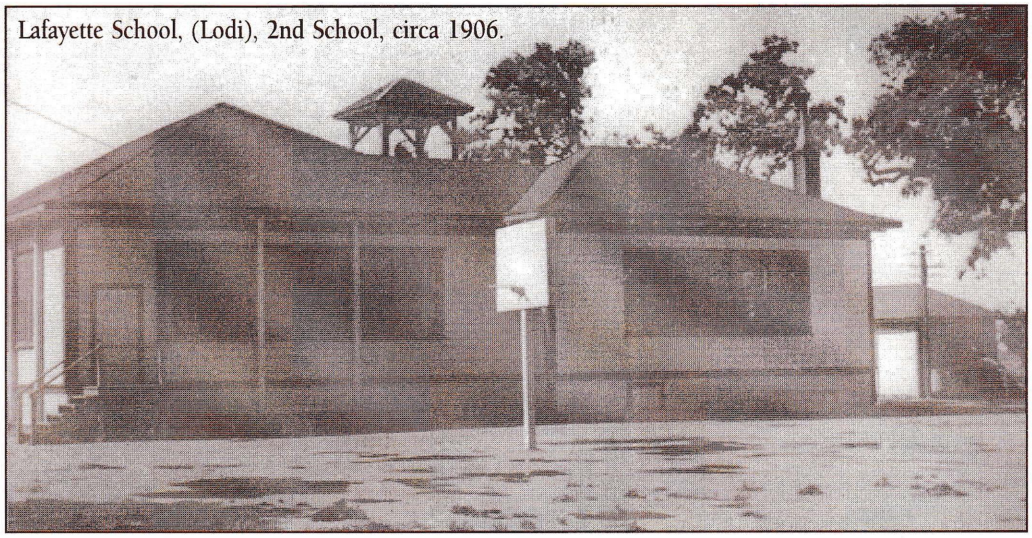
Houston and Lafayette Schools.

libbs, Lester Hunting, Joe Johnson, George Cheatham, rank Stafford, Orlin Woodson, James Conklin, Harold), Yea Matsimoto, Raymond Rankin. Third Row: evere Berryman, Glen Culbertson, Marion Small, l of Woods School.



e Lane.

Lafayette School, (Lodi), 2nd School, circa 1906.



Lafayette School, 1933-1934.

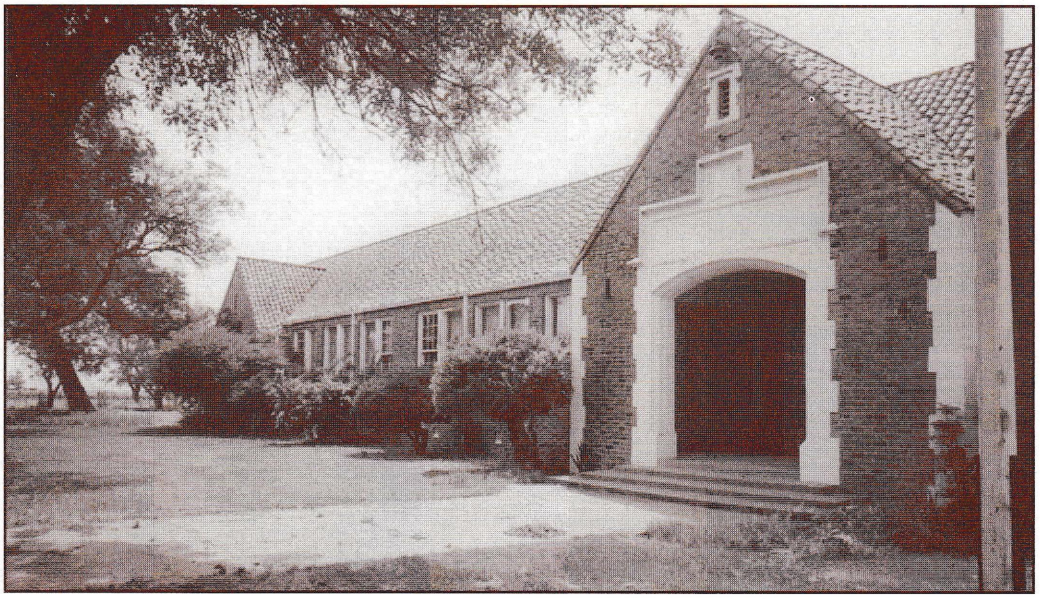
▲ *LAFAYETTE SCHOOL, intermediate grades. Back row (l to r:) Walter Grassi, Elmer Altnora, Jack Mock, Willard Weber, George Mock, Leo Schmidt, Jim Dahl, Paul Schneider, Martin Grassi. Second row: Miss James (later Danver at Lockeford School), Bob Nighswanger, Vernon Grassi, Homer Weahant, Betty Lausten, Beverly Shinn, Lawrence Lebowsky, Earl Bunds, Edwin Wardrobe. First row: Wilma Wardrobe, Laura Jones, Harriet Rice, Ethel Schneider, Esther Ziemann, Thelma Morris, Kazu Okura, Haruko Hanaki, Mildred Jensen.*

The Houston School District was formed in May of 1860 and a school was built on the property of Judge C. P. Brown a mile east of Acampo along the Central Pacific Railroad. In 1902 a new school was built with additions 17 years later. In 1937 a new wood framed school house on the south-east corner of Highway 99 and Acampo Road. A six room masonry building was added 12 years later.

The Lafayette School District was formed in 1860 and built a one-room school on the Thorp Property on the north side of Kettleman Lane between Davis and Telegraph Roads. In 1906 the school building was sold and moved to Telegraph Road (now De Vries Road) and converted into a private residence. A new two-room school replaced it and in 1916 a third room was added. The school was closed and sold after 1968.

The Harmony Grove School District was formed in 1882 and a one-room school was built on Harney Lane and what is now known as Highway 88. The wooden building was replaced in 1882. In 1927 a three-room brick school was built. The old Calaveras School was moved to the site to provide more room. The school closed in 1975 and the brick building became a private residence, while the old Calaveras School moved again, this time to the park at Micke Grove.

Live Oak School District was officially formed on February 9, 1864 just west of Cherokee Lane at Live Oak Road. In 1906 a tax bond was approved to enlarge the school. The state highway department purchased most of the Live Oak School site and the trustees acquired ten acres on Wyandotte Road in 1944. It was five years later before the new 14,600 square foot building, including seven classrooms, was completed and the seventh and eighth graders were able to return from Needham School.

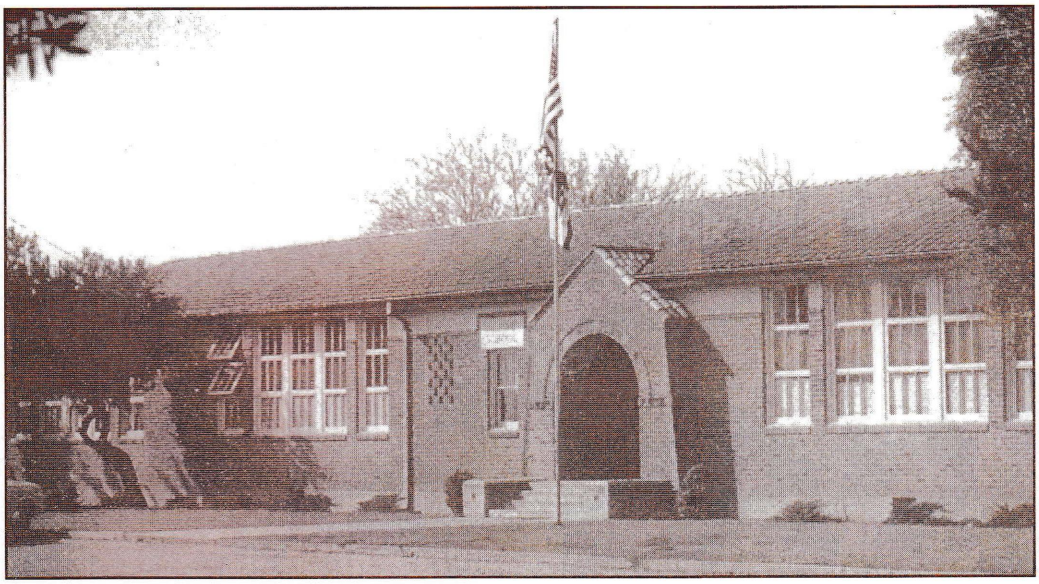


▲ *HARMONY GROVE SCHOOL, c 1971. Three room brick school of 1927 replaced earlier wooden schools of 1862, 1882 and 1900. Located on Harney Lane and Highway 88, the building became a private home after 1975.* *Courtesy the Bank of Stockton Historical Photograph Collection.*

▲ *LIVE OAK SCHOOL. Second school built in 1906 west of Cherokee at Live Oak Road.*

▲ *LIVE OAK SCHOOL. Second from right, Tom Elyn Cheatham, in front.*

▲ *LIVE OAK SCHOOL, c 1930. Elwyn Cheatham 4th from left, in front.*



The Alpine School District was formed May 17, 1864 and the first schoolhouse was built that year on the west side of Alpine Road and 1 mile north of Kettleman Lane. A new schoolhouse was built in 1882 and 1905 of wood but by 1931 a brick three-room school with auditorium and cafeteria.

Victor School District became a new school district on February 2, 1910 and a two-room building was built on Victor Road south of the town in 1911. Five years later they had one more classroom and

▲ *ALPINE SCHOOL, c 1931. Three room brick schoolhouse.*

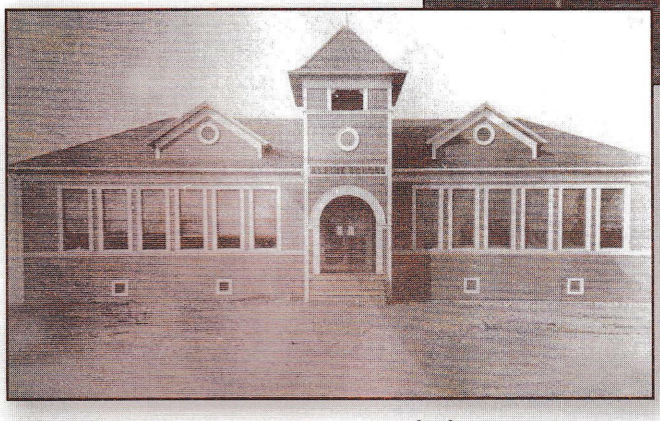
ALPINE SCHOOL, 1938. ▶
Seventh and Eighth Grades
Teacher: Miss Mary Rathbun

First Row: Verlin Schwemmer, Mikio Masuda, Katsumi Kume, Elton Burgstahler.

Second Row: Helen Buchmiller Silva, Nadine Frey, Virginia Weiderrich Young, Opal Scheideman Jenner, Ellen Young Guilfoyle, Irene Nies, Helen Haabesland Laughead.

Third Row: Artie Schmidt, Jerry Pope, Helen Young Salisbury, Vivian Pope, Mary Reuscher Seibel, Ella Geringer, Henry Reimche Jr. (Hank), Bob Beckman.

Fourth Row: Jimmy Naguchi, Ben Schmidt, Joe Mitchel, Charlie Ludwig, Reuben Frey, Johnny Weiderrich, Henry Geringer, Marvin Nies.



▲ *ALPINE SCHOOL, 1905. Two room schoolhouse built with $1600 bond.*

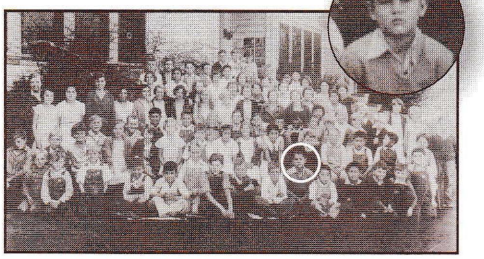
ALPINE SCHOOL, 1930. Edwin Bender (upper left), ▶
Al Preszler (holding ball), Cap Mettler (on right), Mary Rathbun, teacher.

an auditorium/cafeteria. The building was closed as a school in 1968 but is still used as learning center for handicapped adults.

Alpine and Victor Districts merged in 1951, and was then called Alpine-Victor and in 1978 Alpine School ceased operations. A new Victor School was built a block north of town on Bruella Road. The $900,000 complex opened in 1978 for kindergarten through sixth grade.

These ten grammar schools made up the districts of the Lodi High School area when the new school was built in 1913.

▼ *VICTOR SCHOOL, c 1914, Grades 1st thru 4th.*



▲ *VICTOR SCHOOL, c 1933, 8th grade. Can you guess who is pictured in the inset?*

Credits: *San Joaquin County Schools 1852-1990. Duncan Press for Layout & Printing.*

THE LODI HISTORIAN

is a quarterly publication of the Lodi Historical Society
P.O. Box 264, Lodi, CA 95241-0264

Editor Ralph Lea

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▲ *VICTOR SCHOOL, c 1912. Two rooms and eight grades, built on Green property by Fitzsimmons.*

▲ *VICTOR SCHOOL Band, c 1930. Left to right: Melvin Schmiedt, Effidene Beckman, Schlotthauer, George Schlotthaur, Schlotthauer, Ole Mettler, Ellsworth Beckman and Leon Handel.*

▲ *Graduating class of VICTOR SCHOOL in 1930; Teacher Mrs. R. F. Declusin; Students: LaVern Marrs, Freda Christman, Hilda Schmierer, Eleanor Blum, Lenora Handel, Stella Ducas, Gilbert Zweigle, Leo Geigle, Henry Schmiedt, Edna Pokert, Anna Horst, and Rosina Geigle.*